

CORTEZ CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR WORKSHOP/SPECIAL MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2021, 5:30 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting/in-person and Virtual Contact by ZOOM

1. The workshop was called to order at 5:32 p.m., with a Hybrid Meeting/in-person and Virtual Contact by ZOOM format. Councilmembers present in the Council Chambers included Mayor Mike Lavey, Robert Dobry, Mayor Pro-tem Rachel Medina, David Rainey, and Arlina Yazzie. Councilmember Orly Lucero participated by ZOOM. Staff members present by ZOOM included City Planner Tracie Hughes, Aquatics Supervisor Michelle Devall, Director of Public Works Phil Johnson, Water Treatment Plant Senior Operator Randy Hunt, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Rich Landreth, and City Attorney Mike Green. Director of Finance Kelly Koskie, Director of Parks and Recreation Palmquist, Chief of Police Vernon Knuckles, City Manager John Dougherty, City Clerk Linda Smith, IT Support Technician Kyle Kuhn, and System Analyst Shay Allred were present in the Council Chambers. There were five people signed up as participants on ZOOM.

2. Dr. Kent Aikin gave an update regarding current COVID-19 regulations. He commented that the vaccine seems to be taking care of many different strains of COVID and he noted that there are many different locations in Montezuma County are available for a person to receive the vaccine. He spoke about the mask mandate noting that the Governor will most likely lift requirements for masks by the middle of May and that local governments and private entities will likely make their own rules for entrance into their buildings. He recommended that social distancing and masking continue to be encouraged as he feels it has made a difference. He spoke about encouraging others that have not received the vaccine to get one to help prevent another surge. He spoke about offering the vaccine in different locations to make it easier for people to get them. He stated that it is not a big risk as originally thought in regard to high touch places (such as the climbing wall at the Recreation Center). Dr. Aikin encouraged people that do not feel well to stay home so that people are not exposed unnecessarily.

3. Director of Finance Koskie made a presentation on the budget changes that have occurred since the first of the year noting that the expenditures may cause an audit finding for 2021 due to the large amount that has been approved. She stated that the City Charter, along with other documents, requires that the City have a balanced budget and changes to the budget should be avoided unless for emergency reasons. She commented that the amounts for the new Assistant Police Chief will need to be budgeted in the Police Department's budget in 2022. Council agreed that any expenses that have not been budgeted should have approval from the Finance Department before the request is brought forward to Council.

4. Director of Parks and Recreation Palmquist spoke about the proposal for opening the outdoor swimming pool and commented that Dr. Kent Aikin's recommendations for re-opening the pool have been taken into consideration. It was noted that a reservation plan would be put in place with time slots available and a maximum capacity of patrons would be allowed in the outdoor pool. He noted that private pool parties and evening swim time for Monday and Wednesday was eliminated last year due to budget reductions. He spoke about staffing the pools, both indoor and outdoor, and that the key hours for the public is the main goal for opening times. He noted that a conversation is being held with the swim teams on their expectations for the summer. He stated

that it has not been determined if swim lessons will be held; however, discussion will continue on the issue. It was noted that the indoor leisure pool is planned to be open on Monday, May 3, 2021 and the outdoor pool is planned to be open over Memorial Day weekend. It was noted that sports (soccer/baseball/etc.) are being open however it is unsure at this time if there will be swim meets this summer.

5. Discussion was held on boundary conflict/surveying errors for vacant City owned property located south of Verde Vu Drive and east of South Cedar Street. City Planner Hughes stated that in 2005 the City received a donation of property for the purpose of a future pocket park; however, after a recent survey for street improvements in the area it was discovered some boundary conflicts with adjacent property. She noted that two legal descriptions overlap and staff is recommending that the boundary correction deed and plat be fixed with the property owners to the east (Por Dia) maintaining their boundary so there would not be a conflict. City Attorney Green stated that the City would need to complete an ordinance to convey the property to the neighbors.

6. Discussion was held on a request from the citizens on placing a four-way stop at 1st and Ash Streets. Director of Public Works Johnson stated that the east/west direction has a stop sign; however, the north/south direction does not. He spoke about the area's proximity to Main Street and noted that traffic in the area will be increasing with the Calkins property being developed with new apartment buildings. Discussion was held on if the four-way stop would back traffic up on Ash Street and Director of Public Works Johnson commented that he does not feel there will be any issues. Council agreed with the recommendation.

7. Director of Public Works Johnson spoke on the current status of the City's water supply and changes proposed to the water use restrictions ordinance. He stated that the City's water supply is driven by available snow pack in the Dolores River Basin. He stated that the current situation regarding the watershed is not encouraging as the below-average snowpack is forecast to be the lowest projected irrigation supply in the history of McPhee Reservoir. He spoke about ramping up the public outreach regarding the importance of saving water and that staff would like to propose amending the water use restrictions ordinance (last addressed in 2004) with regulations on watering times and dates for the restrictions (changing from May 15 through September 15 to April 1 to October 31). He stated that staff will develop an auditing program to assist in efficient irrigation uses in order to reduce wasted water and noted that the process will be a multi-step program. He spoke about bringing the group of water providers (suppliers of the McPhee Reservoir Project and the Mancos River Watershed) together to create a centralized message of unity surrounding the use of water. It was noted that the water usage fees may need to be reviewed and adjusted to encourage residents to conserve water and be water wise.

8. General Council Discussion - Councilmember Dobry asked if the Local Vendor Preference information could be shared with Council at a future worksession.

The worksession meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.